

## **AUSTRALIAN INVOLVEMENT in WW1**

Australia's first involvement in WW1 was a hastily formed invasion force, The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force landed at a point south of Blanche Bay, New Guinea and suffered the first Australian deaths of the War in an ambush on the jungle road from Kabakaul 11<sup>th</sup> September 1914. Seven Australians were killed and five were wounded.

### **ANZAC DAY 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915**

The first time that Australian and New Zealand Soldiers fought together under the name of ANZAC and a legend was born. On the first day of the Gallipoli landing an estimated 2,000 were killed or wounded. The main battles fought by Australians were

Lone Pine 6/8/1915 till 9/8/1915, The Nek 7/7/1915, Sari Bair (August Offensive) 6/8/1915 to 21/8/1915, Hill 60 21/8/1915.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Brigade landed on Gallipoli in May 1915 without their horses. They suffered catastrophic losses in August 1915 at the Battles of the Nek and Hill 60. After the withdrawal from Gallipoli they stayed in the Middle East.

Withdrawal from Gallipoli was 20<sup>th</sup> December 1915 from North Beach. Gallipoli was a failure for the Anzac Forces, 8,709 Australian soldiers were killed, 620 died 25/4/1915, 59 from the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion one of the first battalions to land on the first day.

### **FROMELLES 19<sup>th</sup> July 1916.**

Fromelles was the first major battle for Australians on the Western Front.

Australian casualties totalled 5,553 killed or missing or taken Prisoner s of War. Over 600 were in captivity. It was another catastrophic military failure.

### **POZIERES 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1916 to 7<sup>th</sup> August 1916**

Over 42 days the Australians made as many as 19 attacks against the German position. The total of casualties totalled an appalling 23,000men killed, wounded or taken prisoner. The second attack on 2/8/1916 resulted in the Australians taking the town, they were relieved on 7<sup>th</sup> August '16.

**The Windmill** was part of the fighting at Pozieres; it was captured by the Australians on 4/8/16 with almost 7,000 casualties.

### **MOUQUET FARM 13<sup>th</sup> August1916.**

The battle of Mouquet Farm was the last of the battles in the Pozieres area involving Australians. They attacked the night of the 13/8/1916, a company under Captain Harry Murray 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion NSW. They seized part of the German Fabeck north east of the Farm but were outflanked by the Germans and had to fight their way back to safety. Approx 11,000 Australian casualties in the fighting. Many were taken prisoner.

### **FIRST BATTLE OF BULLECOURT 11<sup>th</sup> April 1917**

More than 3,330 Australian soldiers killed or wounded, 1170 captured, the largest number of Australians captured in any action during the War.

### **SECOND BATTLE BULLECOURT 3/5/1917 to 15/5/1917**

AIF casualties totaled 7,482 from three Australian Divisions. The Germans eventually withdrew from the remnants of the village.

### **BATTLE OF MESSINES 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 1917**

Australian Troops attacked German positions on Messines Ridge at the southern most point as a decoy for the following battle at 3am on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June. It started with the detonation of 19 mines under German trenches. Australian Tunnellers were instrumental at the laying of these mines with English Tunnellers. They secretly dug two large mineshafts under Hill 60. At 3.10am on 7/6/17 the British detonated 19 mines. The Australian troops were withdrawn in July, they went on to fight at Ypres from September and then returned to garrison the Messines trenches through the winter of 1917-1918

### **THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES 31/7/1917 to 10/11/1917**

Polygon Wood 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> September 1917, 5,770 casualties.

Broodseinde 4<sup>th</sup> October 1917, 6,500 casualties.

Passchendaele 12<sup>th</sup> October 1917, 38,000 casualties.

### **PASSCHENDAELE (also known as the Battle of Ypres)**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 1917, British Divisions , with support of Australian troops from the second division attacked in terrible conditions towards the village of Passchendaele. A fresh assault was ordered on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October , spearheaded by the Australian Third Division and the New Zealanders with the Australian 4<sup>th</sup> Division in support. Men had to push forward in the quagmire against the German pillboxes armed only with grenades, rifles, and machine guns. A few Australians reached the edge of Passchendaele; however, they were not strong enough to hold the ground and were forced back. Australian losses for the 12<sup>th</sup> of October were 3000 casualties for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division and 1000 for the 4<sup>th</sup> Division for no gain. The fighting in these weeks cost the Australians a total of 38,000 casualties from just 8 weeks of fighting.

During the 5-month campaign almost 500,000 men were lost.

### **BATTLE OF AMIENS 8/8/1918 to 11/8/1918**

Australian casualties 6,000. Australians were in the southern sector near the village of Villers-Bretonneux.

### **VILLERS BRETONNEUX 24/4/1918**

First attack. 25/4/1918 the town was recaptured from the Germans. Total Australian casualties 2,473

### **BATTLE OF HAMEL 4/7/1918**

First time Australian and American troops fought together. Around 1380 Australian and American troops were killed. First Battle planned by LT General John Monash since taking command of the Australian troops the previous month.

### **MONT ST QUENTIN 29/8/1918**

Between the 31/8/1918 and 3/9/1918, three divisions of the Australian Corps attacked and captured the hill of Mt St Quentin at a cost of 3,000 casualties.

### **PERONNE 31/8/1918 to 3/9/1918**

Peronne was part of the fighting for the capture of Mont St Quentin

### **BATTLE OF MONTBREHAIN 5/10/1918**

The last action involving Australian troops on the Western Front. Advancing on the early morning of 5/10/1918 the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade AIF succeeded in occupying the village and in the process took 400 German prisoners. The action claimed 430 Australian casualties.

### **AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE**

Fought with British troops at Suez and Romani. Their biggest success was at Beersheba 31/10/1917. During the charge 31 Light Horsemen were killed and 36 were wounded. About 70 horses died. In all 1,394 Light Horsemen were killed or wounded in three years of fighting